

JOHN MURRAY BIOGRAPHY

by Douglas Murray

Preface

I wish to explain to the readers of this biographical sketch that the work represents neither an exhaustive nor complete examination of John Murray's life. What I have attempted to do is to put together a few of the pieces of his life's puzzle and to set in some kind of chronological and sensible order the events which transpired. (To my knowledge this has never been attempted before.) I would like to express sincere thanks to my initial researcher and dear friend, Robert J. Stevens, for without his impetus this modest enterprise would not have been possible. This volume is solely my own and I therefore accept full responsibility for any errors which might exist because of my own interpretations or lack of correct data.

Douglas Murray

Tucson

August 1, 1978

John Murray was born in Melrose Parish, Roxburgh County, Scotland on Jun 20 1814. For those readers familiar with existing genealogical data, it will be immediately apparent that the birthplace I have stated is at variance with those sources. I base my premise on several key points. Firstly, John faithfully swore on no less than three occasions (The office of the Church Historian, Seventies Quorum Genealogical Records. No. WR f pt 1, item 3. General Record of Quorums to 1911, 29th Quorum, line No. 6.) and twice to complete records of the Church Historian's Biographies of Seventies and once at the time of his ordinance work in the Endowment House (The Office of the Church Historian, Genealogical and Biographical Records of Quorums 20-30. No. WR f pt 11. Records of the 29th Quorum Biographies, Folio 155) that he was born in Galashiels, Roxburghshire, Scotland. (A "shire" is a county in Britain. The word is generally placed as a suffix to most English, Scottish, and Welsh counties.) It will at first appear that I have made an error--that these are incontrovertible facts, but a close examination on a Lowlands map reveals that Galashiels is in Selkirk County and not in Roxburghshire.

Having lived in England for several years myself, I am keenly aware of the average Briton's allegiance to his county of ancestral and home ties. Assuming that John was not basically different than his countrymen in this regard, it is more probable that he would purposely misinform someone about his little known birthplace (Melrose is hardly known out of its adjacent district) and in its stead declare a larger town that anyone from Scotland or with a Scottish map could relate to. In his declaration of birth, however, he could never disclaim Roxburghshire as his

home county, but instead began a village and county statement combination that would satisfy all interested parties.

Secondly, the family had been living in or around Melrose since David Murray came down from Stow in 1753 (Bowden Parish Register, Vol. 1, Marriages 1697-1897, David Murray entry). David's children were born across the River Tweed in Drygrange, and one of them, David Junior, raised his family there as well. And in turn, one of these sons named Andrew must have also resided in the parish of his fathers.

We know little of John's father except what he told us of him. In Scottish genealogy it is not unusual to find sketchy data within parish registers due to the nature of their authorship. For example, if Andrew had become disaffected with the Parish Vicar it would have become difficult for him to get his marriage solemnized or to have his children christened in that parish. Or if the young couple could not afford to pay the several shillings "to the poor," they would simply forego the ceremonies of marriage and christening and live outside of the Vicar and his records. As a result, there is much missing from parish registers. I believe that Andrew Murray and his family became victims of this unfortunate situation.

Thirdly, although the parish records note nothing relating to the life of John's father, it does record that his mother died in Melrose (Melrose Parish Register, vol. 4, Deaths 1781-1819, Elisabeth Elliot entry.) If you consider the fact that she died of "declining health" when John was only one and a half years old, it would be safe to assume that she had been in the area since John's birth. If she had been there then John also was either in or very near Melrose during his early years.

And lastly, John's declarations of his birthplace being in Galashiels are quite in order considering that they were made several thousand miles from the place in question. I would speculate that it became his habit while in the British Army (Public Record Office, London. No. WO 12 8404 HK 5976. this is a record of the 'return of the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, Trumpeters, Drummers, &c. and Privates of the 79th Regiment of Cameron Highland who have died, deserted, or have been delivered up in consequence of being Apprentices of Deserters from other Corps., or who have been transferred to some other Regiment, Discharged, Invalided, &c. or become missing during the three months, from 1st April to 30 June 1832, or whose deaths, &c. having happened previously, have been ascertained in the Course of the quarter...' It states that Private John Murray of Galashiels, Roxburghshire, enlisted with the Regiment 11 December 1827 and deserted from Your 'Toronto', Ontario, Canada on 1 May, 1832.)to reply to inquiries of his birthplace with an answer his fellow Scots could recall seeing, passing through, or hearing about. Since Melrose is such a tiny village and Galashiels (which lies four miles westward and is much larger) would be known by more of his comrades, he came to use the latter as his standard reply.

In keeping with this same thread of logic, consider what his children submitted to the author of Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah prior to its publication. (Frank Esshom, Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah, Salt Lake City: 1966, p. 1052.) In the brief paragraph highlighting John's life, he is credited as having been born in Edinburgh (which lies thirty miles to the northwest). Just as Melrose meant nothing to his fellow soldiers or to those whom he later associated, he declared his birth in

the largest nearby town; so also did Galashiels mean nothing to his American-born children who proceeded to declare his birth in the largest nearby city.

The major discrepancy which must be cleared up has to do with his parentage. For the early genealogist it became quite an easy task to match up a child with a parent simply because the names were the same, and therefore there exists several Family Group records and the current edition of Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah with errors in them. John's parents were Andrew Murray and Elizabeth Elliot as attested to by the fact that he declared so on the same three separate occasions listed in footnotes 1, 2, and 3. I personally hold this as incontestable evidence, and refute any contradictory pedigrees.

There exists documentation, however, which would indicate that John was raised by his grandmother, Christian Murray. Three facts bear out this conclusion. Firstly, John's mother died in January of 1816 and the eighteen month old child had to be cared for by another adult. Secondly, John joined the army in 1827 when only thirteen and a half years old. Thirdly, John's pay record did not list a parent as next of kin. (The Public Record Office, op. cit., no WO 12 8404 HK 5976. One entry extracted from the Company 'Soldier's Account Book', states that John's next of kin—in case of death or desertion—was his grandmother Christian Murray.) When these disjointed facts are pieced together it becomes apparent that upon the death of Elisabeth, Andrew gave the infant to his mother, Christian, because he had work commitments that precluded his raising the child. As John grew without the special kind of love that only a parent can bestow, it was easy for him to leave home at that early age and join the Army.

Once in His Majesties service, however, he made compensation to his loving grandmother by making her his beneficiary.

Proceeding with the assumption that young John was raised with his grandmother, his adolescent behavior becomes quite predictable. He fell heir to a socio-economic future that was bleak at best. Even if his grandmother was not impoverished, coin and currency were rare commodities in rural Scotland. There, most people who got their living from the land either were or came to be simple wage-earners, and the nearer one approaches 1830 the greater the proportion of the rural population that falls into this category. (R. C. Smout, A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830,--New York: 1969, p 315.) The wage that they earned was meager and usually in kind. To illustrate my point here is a note taken from the observations of an 18th century commentator:

“Victual (food) then is all the product of this country and when
it giveth a good price then it goeth well with the masters and
heritors (inheritors), but when it is otherwise they are ordinarily
much strained for money. The women of the country are mostly
employed in spinning and working of stockings and making of
plaid--webs, which the Aberdeen merchants carry over sea. And it

is this which bringeth money to the commons, other ways of getting
it they have not.” (MacFarlane’s Geographical Collections, a. Mitchell and
J. T. Clark, eds.,--Scottish Historical Society, 1908, Vol. III, p. 225.

When the Chronicler said that the common people had no money except from their wives’ earnings he was not necessarily using a figure of speech, and although the system had become modified somewhat when John was a young man a century later, it had not totally disappeared. A Lothian hind (a skilled farm worker or servant from John’s area of Scotland) in the 1820’s was still paid mostly in grain: every year he received a “conventional quantity of oatmeal, barley, and pease (plural of pea), possible ten, three, and two bolls (bowls full) of each” together with grazing for a cow, harvest victuals, and possession of a garden of one sixteenth of an acre. Unless the hind had a large family, he sold some of the meat to village tradesmen or farm servants who were not paid in kind. The hind would now, however, also get a small money wage amounting to a half or a third of the value of his total income. To a highly skilled ploughman this might by 1815 be as much as £15 or £20 a year in cash. The unskilled farm worker of the same period, the “day labourer” who lived either in a bothy (back room) or in his own hut apart from the farm buildings, was almost completely dependent on a money wage. Should he graze a cow and keep meal in bulk like the hind, he had to pay the farmer the market price for grazing and grain out of his cash earnings. (L. J. Saunders, Scottish Democracy 1815-1840, Edinburgh: 1950, pp. 50-51

At thirteen years of age, John could have still been living with his grandmother or could have been an unskilled farm worker on a neighboring farm. In either circumstance he, although poor, had the same dreams as any young man of that era; after running away from home and finding his way to the New World, adventures and fortunes would await him as the ripe fruit awaits the picker’s hand. It is not small wonder then that he saw in the Royal Army a means to fulfill his vision of travel and learn a trade too. (the Public Record Office, op.Cit.,

No. WO 12 8404 HK 5976. The entry which indicates the Soldier’s trade states that John was a ‘wright’, or a maker and repairer of wheels and wheeled vehicles.)

Although John’s activities for the next three and one half years are not specifically known, I would speculate that he apprenticed as a wright during this period. When this was completed in August of 1831, he sailed with his regiment from Aberdeen to Quebec (The Office of the Church Historian, op.cit., folio 155.) as a part of King William IV’s show of force to threatening advances by expansionists in the United States. Historians fail to show any significant border disputes during this period, so I will assume that John was a part of a security force of some kind. We can also conclude that John’s involvement with the Americans either before or after his desertion was not one of armed conflict because while he was in the Toronto, Ontario area adjacent to Niagara Falls he was free enough to cross the border and mingle with the “enemy”. (From the brief Life Sketch of Jeremiah Hatch Murray, p.)

Whether it was the attraction of America, or its young ladies, or both, that compelled him we do not know. He did serve the crown for eight months at the York Garrison in Toronto, however, but the freedom offered across the river was too much to resist. Desertions must have been relatively common, because in his Regiment alone there were seven others during May 1832. (the Public Records Office, op cit., No. WO 12 8404 HK 5976.) He probably found employment in the Buffalo area and sometime during the following seventeen months met the lovely Irish immigrant named Sarah Bates whom he courted and married on October 28, 1833 in Buffalo, Erie County, New York by Henry Slade, Esq. (Temple Records Index Bureau, op. cit., No. 1663, Bk.A, p. 59. note: Although Buffalo is one of the New York areas which have marriages recorded as far back as 1820, John Murray's is not among them. I have reason to believe that their marriage by an 'Esquire' and not by a 'Reverend' is the reason for its absence. It is also significant in that it perhaps tells us something of their eagerness to be married without the normal—and perhaps hazardous—publicity. I would also like to note that this date is not the same as what John declared in his Seventy's biography—that being 7 November, 1833. I maintain that this is a classic example of someone asking the husband the date instead of asking the wife. I submit that the TIB record reflects the correct date and probably the one in which the wife was asked.) He took his new bride immediately to settle with him in southeastern Michigan. It was here in Monroe, Monroe County, that they lived for the next eleven years (Monroe lies midway between Detroit and Toledo). It is in Monroe County that we find recorded the family's first seven children coming into the world: Christian, John, Edward, Richard, Elizabeth, Robert and Jeremiah Hatch. (the Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Family Group Record of John Murray—Born 1814) Christian died when she was eight and one half months old, followed a year and one half later by the death of their third child, Edward, when but two days old. That was on Christmas Day, 1837.

It was the birth of the last child, Jeremiah Hatch, which coincided with the conversion of the parents to the Mormon faith, and because the couple were so impressed with the missionary which brought the Gospel to them, they named their new born son in his honor. John and Sarah must have been very inspired with the words of Elder Jeremiah Hatch, for they willingly prepared to leave their home and journey to be with the Saints in Missouri. The proselyting missionaries usually admonished the new converts to heed the counsel of the Presiding Brethren with regards to relocating with the body of the Saints and thereby strengthen the infant Church.) The Church was still young and there were many trials which awaited them as they set out to follow this new faith. Among the hardest decisions to make were those concerning the sacrifices that would be expected of them, and the possibility of the giving of their lives in the struggle (the Prophet Joseph Smith and his brother Hyrum had been martyred in Carthage, Illinois just two weeks prior to the Murray's baptism). But undaunted, John, Sarah, and the family took the necessary steps to outfit themselves for migration, and departed to join the Missouri Saints shortly following their 1844 conversion. In their journeying, they must have at one time dwelt in St. Louis for their last child, Joseph Albert, was born there in 1846 and died there two months later. The Genealogical Society, op.cit., Family Group Record of John Murray, b. 1814).

We don't know how much time elapsed during this Missouri chapter, but I suspect that while there John responded to a general epistle sent by Brigham Young and the Twelve from Winter Quarters December 23, 1847, (Although Brigham Young entered the Salt Lake Valley in July of that year, he returned to Winter Quarters that fall to supervise the Saints there. It was

decided to vacate Winter Quarters in the spring of 1848—as urged by the Omaha Indians and their agents—and provide for as many of its inhabitants as possible to go to the Salt Lake Valley, and those who could not do this were to move to the east side of the river and locate in Pottawattamie County, Iowa. B. H. Roberts, A Comprehensive History of the Church, Provo, Utah: 1965, Vol. III, pp. 293-306.) calling all converts of the Church to gather to the eastern bank of the Missouri River preparatory to the further migration to the Rocky Mountains. (Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 308-314.) They were called to settle temporarily on the land then vacated by the Pottawattamie Indians, and owned by the United States Government. Kanesville (as the main settlement was to be called) was to be their resting place for a season. The Pottawattamie settlement lay across the Missouri River from Winter Quarters (Kanesville is present-day Council Bluffs, Iowa and Winter Quarters is present day Omaha, Nebraska). There were about 1500 Saints located on the Pottawattamie lands at this time. (Ibid., Vol. III, p. 321.) “Their settlements extended some fifty or sixty miles along the east bank of the Missouri River, reaching back to the east side of the said river some thirty or forty miles.” (Orson Pratt, General Epistle to the Saints in Great Britain, The Millennial Star, --Manchester: 1848--, vol. X, pp. 241-247) John and his family were domiciled in dwelling 845--as indicated by a census taken in the spring of 1850 for the First Presidency—(The Office of the Church Historian, Census of Saints in Pottawattamie County, Iowa, Spring of 1850, p. 233.) Robert Murray was not included in that census because he died earlier that year at the age of eight. (The Genealogical Society, op. cit., Family Group Record of John Murray, b. 1814).

The events of the next two years are a matter of much political intrigue that could easily carry me on for several pages. Let me suffice it to say that the political parties of Iowa (namely the Whigs and the Democrats) were keenly interested in the several hundred votes which existed in that county.

The most ambitious and outgoing of the two major parties was the Whig Party, for its representatives openly solicited Mormon leaders and succeeded in capturing their confidence by assuring them that the Whigs were “pledged to them and the country to a firm and unyielding protection to Jew, Gentile, and Christian of every name and denomination, with all other immunities rightfully belonging to every citizens of the land.” (Roberts, op. cit., Vol. III. P 324). This set of promises proved to be the balm necessary to restore the Saints’ confidence in political processes and politicians, and the Saints very generally voted for the Whig ticket, state and National. This of course embittered the Democratic Party of Iowa against the Saints, who, in the course of the next few months, swore revenge.

It was while the Democratic State Senate was passing resolutions against the Saints (Ibid., Vol. III, p 326). that the First Presidency in Salt Lake made it quite clear to the Pottawattamie settlers that theirs was never intended to be a permanent settlement and that they should prepare to leave the next spring--spring of 1852. (Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 327-328). Apparently the Saints had become quite comfortable in the area and really did not look forward to the long trek westward. But west they did go, and among them was John and Sarah Murray plus their four surviving children. Pioneers and Prominent Men of Utah states that they came by ox team (Esshom,op. cit., p. 1052). complete with their struggles, hardships, relief, and rejoicings.

The early Church leaders wasted no time in putting John's talents and energies to work and ordained him a Seventy in September 1852, just a month or so after arrival in the valley. (The Office of the Church Historian, op. Cit., Line number 6.)

The 29th Quorum of Seventy was a part of the Kaysville Ward which is located fifteen miles north of Salt Lake City. Whether or not he resided there permanently is difficult to ascertain. Two months later (November 1852), John and his wife Sarah received their own endowments in the Endowment House in Salt Lake City, however they were not sealed as husband and wife for another twelve years. (Temple Records Index Bureau, op. cit., No. 1663, Bk. A, p. 59.)

A month and a half later, (late December, 1852) the John Murray family appear in the "*Report of the Bishops of the Church*" in American Fork, Utah. (The Office of the Church Historian, Report of the Bishops of the Church, American Fork Ward, December 28, 1852.) This report was ordered by President Young to account for those who had or had not successfully negotiated the plains, and again, I have no way of knowing if this was at all permanent, for no other records appear for him in American Fork.

American Fork lies twenty-five miles south of Salt Lake City and is therefore a considerable distance from his first touchdown in Kaysville, but this does not end his migration, for his next domicile was Spanish Fork, twenty more miles south of American Fork.

It is generally accepted that Spanish Fork was the family home of it is here that he owned a farm, raised his children and died. (Esshom, op.cit., p. 1052.) It was here, no doubt, that he must have practiced the wheel 'wright's' trade and since Spanish Fork is a relatively small town, I would speculate that it is possible that he may have been the only one in its service.

Six months after his settling in the valley of the Great Salt Lake he followed the counsel of the Brethren and took another wife to wed. Her name was Ann Denston, and she was followed in polygamy some time later by Mary Gale. (the Genealogical Society, op. cit., Family Group Record of John Murray, b. 1814). It is not known what church callings he held, but we do have the work of *Pioneers and Prominent men of Utah* that he was a Patriarch. (Esshom, op. cit., p. 1052.) Like so much of Esshom's data, it seems unlikely that he held this Church calling since he is not listed in the Church Historian's file of Patriarchs. I would speculate that his family, who submitted his biographical sketch for Esshom's volume, thought of him as the head of the Murray Clan in America and therefore regarded him as the patriarchal head of his extended family. He did ordain his second oldest son, Richard, an Elder in March of 1858, (the Office of the Church Historian, Record of Genealogies of the Elders Quorum, Spanish Fork City, November 24, 1861, Vol. 1, p. 22, entry 96), and his oldest son, John, and Elder in December of 1859. (*Ibid.*, entry 59.) Besides these ordinations, he is also on record as having performed some baptisms and marriages as late as 1863. (The Office of the Church Historian, Record of the Spanish Fork Ward prior to 1865, Vol. I, p. 18). The Spanish Fork Ward does not contain membership records for John Murray, so we cannot tell in what capacity he was functioning.

John's ties to Spanish Fork were not unbreakable, for in 1865 he accepted a call from President Young to be a "missionary to the Muddy." (Esshom, op. cit., p.1052.) It was not a mission as we know it today, and therefore he was not a missionary in that same sense. The Muddy was an area to be colonized by Mormon families because it was thought by Church leaders to be insouthwest Utah and thereby as asset to them. (It wasn't until after settlement that surveyors found the Muddy to lie within the boundaries of Nevada). The Muddy Valley, now Moapa Valley, lies on the lower tributaries of the Rio Virgin about forty-five miles to the northeast of present-day Las Vegas and about seventy miles southwest of St. George. John Murray and the other fifty families which first saw the Moapa country (The Office of the Church Historian, Record of the St. Thomas Ward, 1865001866, F# 014924.) were greeted by a lonely barren desert, which was made still more forbidding by being occupied by marauding Indians, who were always ready to attack weak and defenseless travelers, and neglected no opportunity to prey upon the animals of the whites. (From the Brief Life Sketch of Jeremiah Hatch Murray, pp. 1 and 2.) The colony was lead by President Thomas A. Smith, and his assignment was to put a which foothold in the area which the authorities of the Church ascertained was even lower in altitude than St. George, where cotton and other semi-tropical products could be raised successfully. Another object which Brigham Young had in view was the possibility of shipping immigrants and freight from the east and Europe to the Saints in Utah via the Isthmus of Panama, and then ship by water up to the Gulf of California and from there up the Colorado River to the Muddy. President Smith and his company of pioneers arrived in the Muddy Valley early in 1865.(Roberts, op. cit., Vol. V, pp. 129-130.) These colonizers located St. Thomas and St. Joseph on May 28, 1865, at which time the Saints at St. Thomas were organized as a ward and St. Joseph as a dependent branch. (The Office of the Church Historians, op. cit., Records of St. Thomas.) John Murray with his family, John Murray, Jr. with his family, and Jeremiah Hatch Murray (my great-grandfather) with his family were listed as being among those first settlers in St. Joseph. Its first years' record is herein quoted in its entirety:

"The Settlement was organized, W. Foote was elected President May 28th, (organization completed after the 11th of June) about the first of June with Warren Foote Presiding Elder. The city was laid out and a water ditch finished within ten days and the brethren proceeded to plant Corn, Sugar Cane, and some cotton and garden produce. Considerable corn, molasses, mellons and some cotton was raised the first year, but the brethren who came without families, mostly return, weakened the settlement so much that the Indians took most of the corn." (Ibid., F # 014924.)

Elder Erastus Snow reported to the General Conference in April of 1868 that the Saints of the Muddy were generally doing well, but "that it must not be expected that everything will run smooth with them, or that they will realize all their expectations." He went on to say that the

settlements of St. Thomas seemed to be holding their own, but that he “cannot say quite as much for those located at St. Joseph.” He concluded by saying that “it requires stout hearts to develop a new country like that; but perseverance. time and patience will accomplish it.” (Erastus Snow, Journal of Discourses, London: 1869, vol. XII, pp. 214-216.) Although his meaning was somewhat veiled, his words bring home the truth of the matter-these settlements were struggling for survival and would probably not last. Jeremiah Hatch Murray’s biography is replete with hair raising stories of Indian raids and very close calls with death. (From the Brief Life Sketch of Jeremiah Hatch Murray, pp. 1 and 2.) Although he does not mention his father’s experiences, I would not be extending probability too far by claiming that John could also relate similar stories. It seems clear from the records (Esshom, op. cit., p. 1052.) that John was not afraid of an Indian fight, and in fact was a veteran of two.

The first occurred during the first year of the colonization of the Muddy (1865) and took the form of scattered, yet systematic, raids carried out by various Utah Indians on the white settlers in the region. As recorded in A Comprehensive History of the Church, (Roberts, op. cit., Vol. V, pp. 146-153.) the Black Hawk War (named after a Ute Chieftain of that name) was a direct result of the refusal of several of the area Indian tribes to accept a congressional enactment requiring the Indians to remove themselves to the Uintah Valley in the eastern part of Utah, south of the Uintah range of Mountains. Although several of the Tribal chiefs agreed to the treaty, Chief Black Hawk and a number of subchiefs were not present at any of these treaty and relocation meetings. Subsequently these abstaining chiefs came out in open hostility to the whites.

The war itself began with the ambushing of a white man in San Pete County followed by a massacre of a white family in the same area. Soon indiscriminate killings on both sides spread from as far north as Utah County to as far south as Washington County. Although we have no record of any killings in the Muddy Valley, (Ibid., Vol. V, p. 156.) we do have the personal accounts of Jeremiah Hatch Murray (from the Brief Life Sketch of Jeremiah Hatch Murray, pp. 1 and 2.) which attests to the numerous raids and constant harassment by the natives.

Since we know John was in St. Joseph during 1865 and probably 1866 as well, we can assume that his involvement in the war took one or more of the following forms: defensive settle, Home Guardsman, (Ibid., p. 2) or mercenary. Judging from his spirit and his Scottish audaciousness, I would not feel it too bold to say that he earned the honor of being a “veteran” by engaging in one or both of the latter two activities. As to the second armed confrontation noted by Esshom, I do not have sufficient historical data on this Walker War to know where or when it took place. Without this information, I could not accurately speculate on John’s involvement.

Although we do not know how long John and his immediate family stayed in St. Joseph, some historical facts lend themselves to conjecture. We know he performed a few of the baptisms and one marriage in the St. Joseph Branch during 1865 and 1866, (the Office of the Church Historian, op. cit., Records of St. Thomas.) and was therefore in the colony during the latter year. We also know that he did not remain with the settlers until they disbanded in 1871 (Roberts, op.cit., Vol. v, p. 130.) because he shows up in Salt Lake City to swear an oath to become an American citizen in the spring of 1869--which, by the way, was never followed up with naturalization proceedings. (Utah Naturalizations, District Court, April 13, 1869, F#482,920.) I believe he returned with the group leader, Thomas A. Smith, and his son Jeremiah Hatch Murray

in the fall of 1866 (From the Brief Life Sketch of Jeremiah Hatch Murray, p. 1.) due to various reasons, of which I shall try to relate only two. After settlement, considerable prosperity followed the activities of families like the Murray's until the western part of Utah, including the settlements in the Muddy Valley, was transferred to Nevada. Being a new state, Nevada was in need of capital and one of the surest ways to raise needed revenues was to tax. The taxes levied by the new state against the struggling Mormon colonists in the Muddy became so oppressive that their inability to pay contributed in large measure to the disbandment of the settlement in 1871. (the Office of the Church Historian, Records of the Muddy Mission. Note: The early mission and settlement records are not standard Church records but are letters sent to Congress, the governors of Utah and Nevada, etc. trying to straighten out a tax being levied by the State of Nevada. Copies of letters from Brigham Young are included with the instructions on handling the situation. Nevada, assuming its towns were based on mining, demanded tax payment in gold or other precious metal. The pioneers, being farmers, maintained that taxation was difficult enough 'in kind', but that it was absolutely impossible in the medium of exchange required by Nevada). I believe that John could sense the end nearing and, knowing that the colony would never survive under its present conditions, left. No doubt the danger brought to his family by the ever-present hostile Indians was also a large contributing factor in the decision to desert the Muddy Mission.

Although the entire enterprise was abandoned early in 1871, and the towns lapsed into ruins, our story of the Muddy does not end here. Some years later the work of resettlement was begun and the little valley now has three towns: Moapa (formerly St. Joseph), St. Thomas, and Overton. (Roberts, op.cit., Vol. V, p. 130.) These outposts of civilization exist today as grim reminders of our pioneered heritage.

John spent almost the last decade and one half of his life back in Spanish Fork, and although the records are silent as to his activities, I would speculate that he enjoyed the rest and retreat from the desert, the Indians, and the inconvenience of constant mobility. After years of hardship and sacrifice, he no doubt found much solitude and warmth in that small town and took advantage of it to the fullest. His sons and daughters together with their children remained in Spanish Fork until after John's death on November 15, 1880 and Sarah's in 1882. (the Genealogical Society, op.cit., Family Group Record of John Murray, b.1814.) After these passing, the children diffused to areas in eastern and northern Utah where the descendants of John Murray are found in abundance today.

Excerpt from Pioneers & Prominent Men of Utah

John Murray

John Murray (son of Andrew and Christena Murray of Edinburgh, Scotland). Came to Utah 1852 with ox team.

Married Sarah Bates, in Michigan (daughter of John Bates & Sophia Anderson or Ireland). Their children: John, m. Mary

Ann Marlow, m Rachel Allred; Richard, m. Margaret Beck, m Martha Hicks; Elizabeth, m John Moyes; Jeremiah Hatch, m. Maria Nelson, m. Mary Ashby; Edwin, Joseph, and Albert, d, infants: Robert, d. aged 8. Family home Spanish Fork, Utah.

Patriarch: Missionary to the Muddy where he endured many hardships, and took an active part in developing that country.

Veteran Black Hawk and Walker Indian wars. Farmer and wheelwright. Died at Spanish Fork, Utah.

*copy of John Murray 29th Quorum History in possession of Larry C. Murray, a great-great-grandson.

*copy of the Biographical Sketch of John Murray, is in the Uintah County Library, regional room, file folder No. 1029.